**Bulletin of**
**COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**
**DECATUR, GEORGIA**

Vol. XXXIX JULY, 1946 No. 2

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Decatur, Ga., under Act of August 24, 1912
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY AT DECATUR, GEORGIA

# FACULTY NEWS

## Dr. Green Honored

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## Dr. Gear Elected Dean and Professor of Theology

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## Mr. Thompson to Head New Department

DR. J. B. GREEN

## DR. J. B. GREEN HONORED

Few ministers have rendered more faithful and distinguished service to the Church than has Rev. James Benjamin Green, D.D., LL.D., who for the past twenty-five years has been Professor of Systematic Theology and of Homiletics at Columbia Theological Seminary. It was, therefore, singularly appropiate that the year which Dr. Green had chosen for his own retirement should bring him such recognition as is given to very few men.

Not only did the school session of 1945-46 at Columbia Seminary mark the completion of a quarter of a century spent by Dr. Green as a teacher in the instntution; it also brought the rounding out of a period of forty-five years of his service as a minister of the Gospel. Upon learning of his request for retirement at the end of the year, the Alumni Association of the seminary decided that the time had come to express its appreciation of this man. The meeting of the Association on May 20, 1946, will long be remembered by those who attended it. High tribute was paid to the character and work of Dr. Green in brief addresses by Dr. Alton H. Glasure, Dr. Ansley C. Moore, Rev. Donald B. Bailey, and Dr. Wallace M. Alston, each of whom had been a student in his classes. Announcement was made that the Alumni of the seminary, with the approval and assistance of the Board of Directors, had already secured $96,000 to endow the Chair of Theology in honor of Dr. Green, and that they intend to increase this amount substantially. Dr. E. T. Wilson, President of the Association, then presented Dr. Green with a "Book of Appreciation" containing more than one hundred fifty letters in which was expressed the esteem and affection of many of his former students.

The crowning recognition of work well done was yet to come, however. On May 23, 1946, Dr. Green was elected Moderator of the Eight-sixth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., meeting at Montreat, N. C. This office he filled with humility, with dignity, and with exemplary fairness. His work in guiding the Assembly through its deliberations with just the proper amount of humor and of firmness, and his ability to speak the right word at the right time have been widely praised. He will make a worthy spokesman for the Assembly throughout the coming year, and has already accepted various invitations to address church courts, conferences, and individual congregations in various parts of its territory.

Dr. Green's retirement has not yet become so much of a reality as he had anticipated and desired. He will indeed lay down the teaching of theology after the coming quarter of the seminary's work. However, at the request of the Board, he will continue to teach Homiletics throughout the coming session, after which it is hoped that his successor in that department can be named. Dr. Green and his family will live for the present in what has been the Missionary Apartment in the western end of the seminary dormitory. His friends throughout the church will rejoice in the fact that another generation of students is to enjoy his kindly guidance in the classroom before he enters upon the period of rest from the labors of the classroom which he has so well earned.

## Dr. Felix B. Gear Elected Dean and Professor of Systematic Theology

At the meeting of the Board of Directors held in May, Dr. Felix Bayard Gear, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, Tenn., was elected Professor of Systematic Theology and Dean of Instruction in Columbia Thelogical Seminary. He has since accepted that call and will assume his new duties at the beginning of the institution's winter quarter.

Dr. Gear possesses exceptional qualifications for the post to which he has been chosen. A native of Huttonsville, West Virginia, he received his B.A. from Davis & Elkins College in 1923 in that state, which also conferred the degree of D.D. upon him in 1937. He is a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va. in the class of 1926, and received his Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1928. He later continued his graduate studies at Harvard University and at the University of Edinburgh, receiving his Ph.D. from the latter institution in 1937.

Dr. Gear was ordained to the Presbyterian ministry on September 14, 1926, and served for a year as associate pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Beckley, W. Va. He has subsequently had highly successful pastorates in the Presbyterian Church at Columbia, Miss. and in the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, Tenn. From 1933 until 1943 he was Professor of Bible and Vice President of Southwestern at Memphis, where he was highly respected and appreciated by his students and his faculty colleagues alike.

Dr. Gear has been a faithful member of the courts of our Church and has served with distinction on various committees of the General Assembly. Although a busy and successful preacher and pastor, he has found time to continue his work as a scholar and has

DR. FELIX B. GEAR

been much in demand as a lecturer on theological subjects. His native ability, his thorough academic training, his experience as a teacher, and his broad acquaintance with the practical problems of the ministry fit him in unusual degree for the task to which he has been called.

Dr. Gear was married in 1924 to Miss Leona Harper of Macksville, W. Va. He expects to move to Decatur with Mrs. Gear and their two children, Leona Muriel and Albert Richard in the early fall and will live in the faculty residence formerly occupied by Dr. J. B. Green at 501 Columbia Drive. It is expected that during the coming summer he will spend several months in travel and in making contact with some of the leading faculties of Theology in Britain and on the continent, in order that he may have opportunity to study present Theological trends in the European Churches at first hand. Although as Dean of Instruction Dr. Gear will render exceedingly valuable service in helping to shape the curriculum of the seminary and in guiding individual students, his duties in this office will not be such as to interfere with his primary task as Professor of Theology.

REV. CECIL THOMPSON

## REV. CECIL THOMPSON TO HEAD NEW DEPARTMENT

One of the crying needs of the Church in our day is for the development of a new zeal and new techniques for the basic task of Evangelism. Here the seminary has a primary responsibility which has not been adequately fulfilled. For some years the adminstration and the Directors of Columbia Seminary have desired to establish a Chair of Evangelism and Field Supervision in order that more adequate training might be provided for students in the institution, but financial support has been lacking. This year a number of small contributions for the endownment of a work in Evangelsim has encouraged the Board to bevlieve that such an undertaking would meet with the full approval of the supporting synods, and that the time for postive action has come. In this belief the Board has called Rev. Cecil Thompson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Valdosta, Ga., to become Professor ofEvangelism at Columbia Seminary, and he has accepted the challenge of this work.

Mr. Thompson, who is a native of Monrovia, Ala., is a graduate of the University of Florida and received his B.D. from Columbia Seminary in 1931. He later studied at Biblical Seminary in New York, where he earned his S.T.M. degree in 1936. He has served as assistant pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Marietta, Ga. (1931-34), as pastor of the Alpine Church and group in Cherokee Presbytery (1936-8) and as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Valdosta, Ga. (1938-1946). He was married in 1938 to Miss Mary Carolyn Gillespie, who is the only daughter of the late Dr. Richard T. Gillespie, beloved former President of Columbia Theological Seminary.

Mr. Thompson has been active and effective throughout his ministry in work with young people and with the men of the church. He is intensely interested in all forms of Evangelism and has been unusually successful in planning and carrying out a practical evangelistic program for the local church. His work in developing and sustaining a group of outpost missions in the Valdosta area has been particularly outstanding and has attracted attention throughout our Assembly. Mr. Thompson was a special lecturer on this subject at Ministers' Institutes held last year in Union Seminary of Richmond and in Austin Seminary, and has also been a speaker at many of our church courts. Although he will do a certain amount of classroom teaching at Columbia Seminary, his instruction will be primarily practical and clinical, as he guides the students of the institution in definite programs designed to win men to Christ.

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson will move to Decatur with their little daughter, Margo, in September and will temporarily occupy an apartment in the eastern end of the dormitory. During the fall Mr. Thompson will travel extensively to observe what is being done in the field of Evangelism at other seminaries and training schools of America. He will begin his work at Columbia with the opening of the winter quarter.